

## CLAIMS

1. A data processor for reading content data from a continuous area on a storage medium and playing back video and/or audio based on the content data, the continuous area including a data area, in which the content data is stored, and a non-content-data area, in which the content data is not stored, the data processor comprising:

a reading control section for giving an instruction to read the content data of a predefined size from the data area and an instruction to start to play back the video and/or the audio based on the content data that has been read out;

a head for reading the content data from the data area in accordance with the instruction to read; and

a buffer memory for accumulating the content data that has been read,

wherein the reading control section determines the predefined size by the amount of time it takes to skip the non-data area, reads the content data of the predefined size, accumulates the data in the buffer memory, and then gives an instruction to start to play back the content.

2. The data processor of claim 1, wherein the reading control section determines the predefined size by a data read rate at which the content data is read.

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3. The data processor of claim 1, wherein the content data is encoded data representing the video and/or the audio, and

wherein the data processor further includes a decoding section for reading the content data of the predefined size from the buffer memory and decoding the content data in accordance with the instructions given by the reading control section.

15 4. The data processor of claim 1, wherein the minimum area length of the continuous area is determined by a data read rate, which has been defined based on a required data rate to play back the content and on a unit time to perform the playback, and by the size of extra data to be accumulated 20 in the buffer memory, and

wherein the size of the extra data is determined by a data size, which has been defined on the longest seek time it takes to reach the next continuous area and a data rate required for playback during the longest seek time, and by the 5 predefined size.

5. The data processor of claim 1, wherein the non-content-data area includes at least one of a defective area, of which the area length corresponds to at most a permissible 10 defect rate for the continuous area, and a data area including data other than the content data.

6. The data processor of claim 5, wherein the continuous area has an area length that is at least equal to the minimum 15 area length.

7. A data processor for reading content data from a continuous area on a storage medium and playing back video and/or audio based on the content data, the continuous area 20 including a data area, in which the content data is stored,

and a non-content-data area, in which the content data is not stored, the data processor comprising:

15 a reading control section for giving an instruction to read the content data from the data area for a predetermined period of time and an instruction to start to play back the video and/or the audio based on the content data that has been read out;

20 a head for reading the content data from the data area in accordance with the instruction to read; and

25 a buffer memory for accumulating the content data that has been read,

wherein the reading control section determines the predetermined period of time by the amount of time it takes to skip the non-data area, reads the content data for the predetermined period of time, accumulates the data in the buffer memory, and then gives an instruction to start to play back the content.

8. A data processing method for reading content data  
20 from a continuous area on a storage medium and playing back

video and/or audio based on the content data, the continuous area including a data area, in which the content data is stored, and a non-content-data area, in which the content data is not stored, the method comprising the steps of:

5 giving an instruction to read the content data of a predefined size from the data area;

reading the content data from the data area in accordance with the instruction to read;

accumulating the content data that has been read; and

10 giving an instruction to start to play back the video and/or the audio based on the content data,

wherein the step of giving an instruction to read includes determining the predefined size by the amount of time it takes to skip the non-data area, and

15 wherein the step of giving an instruction to start to play back includes accumulating the content data of the predefined size by performing the step of accumulating and then giving the instruction to start to play back.

20 9. The data processing method of claim 8, wherein the

step of giving an instruction to read includes determining the predefined size by a data read rate at which the content data is read.

5 10. The data processing method of claim 8, wherein the content data is encoded data representing the video and/or the audio, and

wherein the method further includes the step of decoding the content data.

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11. The data processing method of claim 8, wherein the minimum area length of the continuous area is determined by a read data size, which has been defined based on a required data rate to play back the content and on a unit time to 15 perform the playback, and by the size of extra data to be accumulated in the buffer memory, and

wherein the size of the extra data is determined by a data size, which has been defined on the longest seek time it takes to reach the next continuous area and a data rate 20 required for playback during the longest seek time, and by the

predefined size.

12. The data processing method of claim 11, wherein the continuous area has an area length that is at least equal to 5 the minimum area length.

13. The data processing method of claim 8, wherein the non-content-data area includes at least one of a defective area, of which the area length corresponds to at most a 10 permissible defect rate for the continuous area, and a data area including data other than the content data.

14. A data processing method for reading content data from a continuous area on a storage medium and playing back 15 video and/or audio based on the content data, the continuous area including a data area, in which the content data is stored, and a non-content-data area, in which the content data is not stored, the method comprising the steps of:  
giving an instruction to read the content data from the 20 data area for a predetermined period of time;

giving an instruction to start to play back the video and/or the audio based on the content data that has been read;

reading the content data from the data area in  
5 accordance with the instruction to read; and  
accumulating the content data that has been read,  
wherein the step of giving an instruction to read  
includes determining the predetermined period of time by the  
amount of time it takes to skip the non-data area, and  
10 wherein the step of giving an instruction to start to  
play back includes reading the content data for the  
predetermined period of time and accumulating the content data  
in the buffer memory by performing the step of accumulating  
and then giving the instruction to start to play back the  
15 content.